Sitting, quietly thinking about the various ways in which film can serve as an educational aid to instruction within the English discipline.

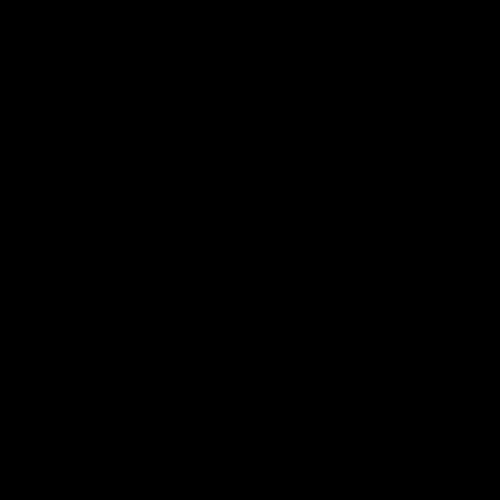
**CONSIDER JIM CARREY AND ZOOEY DESCHANEL ACTING OUT THE GENDER STEREOTYPES OF SPACE OCCUPATION IN *YES MAN*. SHE LEANS INTO HIM, LEGS CROSSED, HANDS IN POCKETS, OCCUPYING A “LADY-LIKE” TRACT OF SPACE; HE SPRAWLS OUT, KNEE PRESSING THE EDGE OF THE FRAME, RIGHT HAND CLAIMING OWNERSHIP OF HER SPACE, HER BODY, CONQUERING NEW LAND WITH A GLARE; CLEARLY THE MASCULINE IS THE CENTER GRAVITY OF THIS**

**FRAME…**

Figure 1. *Yes Man*, 2008

I decided to fire up my computer and watch a favorite of mine from the early film period, Sergei Eisenstein’s *Battleship Potemkin*. A true testament to the complexity of early film rhetoric and an often unnerving exercise in film montage; in reviewing the film I found that the piece is also richly multi-generic. Eisenstein’s montage theory hinged on the principle of “collision” between different shots to illustrate the ideas of thesis and antithesis, the filmmaker based his collage-like collisions of shots on conflicts of scale, volume rhythm, speed of motion, direction of motion, as well as conceptual themes such as class and power.

After the title and credits—typical features of the film genre as a whole—Eisenstein begins *Potemkin* with a white-on-black declaration—

[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)

**PART ONE:**

**[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)THE MEN**

**AND**

**[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)THE MAGGOTS**

**[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)**

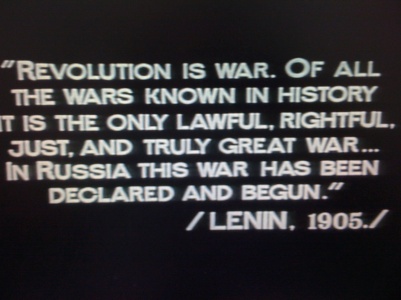
**[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)**

[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)



[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)

[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)



[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)

[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)

[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)The above quote functions as a thesis, informing the audience of the direction and stance of the film.

[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)

[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)



[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)

[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)

[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)



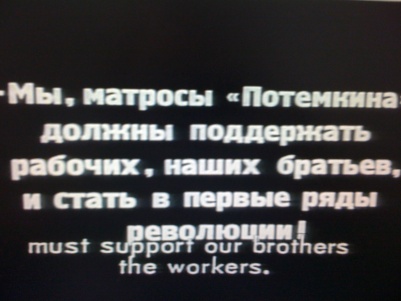
[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)

[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)

[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)

Certainly, this chapter title sets a tone the conflict of collision on a very literal plane—human beings and the squirming offspring of flies—this represents the conceptual thesis of the piece…the Revolution of the Proletariat, the Rise of the Commune and those who would rule it, the Desecration of the Feudal, the Proliferation of the Power of Labor, the Ultimate in Constructivism.

The narrative frame gives way to alternating shots of waves breaking, first on rocks, then on a dam. An orchestric score overlays the frantic motion of these juxtaposing shots. The spraying disipation of waves striking the smooth surface of the dam. The tumultous destruction of waves crashing and bounding across the rocky shore. These shots are reminiscent of the “moving-picture” genre made popular by the Lumiere brothers in the early days of film.

Cluing into this seemingly obsolete genre from film history can serve to inform students of the arbitrary, constructed, and ever-changing nature of genre; thus empowering them to hijack genre for their own purposes.

Note the way in which Eisenstein informs the visual narrative with the textual narrative, using imagery as the primary engine of his philosophical and intellectual theories, while words operate on a supplementary level, inverting the common contemporary use of visuals in the academic world.

Note the juxtaposition of the angles within the frame, another form of cinematic collision.



[](http://www.stoneville.co.uk/images/stones/marble/White_Crystal.jpg)